Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Nuclear testing

Working paper submitted by the Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

1. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons reaffirms that the only way to rid the world of the threat or use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination. In this regard, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is a practical step on the road to nuclear disarmament and, therefore, cannot substitute for the objective of complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

2. While underlining the significance of achieving the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty strongly calls for immediate and unconditional cessation of all nuclear weapon tests and the closure of all nuclear weapon test sites. In this regard, the Group is of the firm view that all States parties that have not yet done so should close and dismantle, as soon as feasible and in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner, any remaining sites for nuclear test explosions and their associated infrastructure, and prohibit completely nuclear weapons research and development, and also refrain from conducting nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, or nuclear weapon tests in alternative ways, as well as the use of new technologies for upgrading the existing nuclear weapons system, which would defeat the object and purpose of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

3. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty recalls and reaffirms once again the commitment of all States parties, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to ending all nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and thereby constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons. In this regard, the Group expresses grave concern at the nuclear weapon tests in alternative ways and the use of new technologies for upgrading the existing nuclear weapons systems, as well as the development of new types of nuclear weapons, which may result in the resumption of tests and a lowering of the nuclear threshold. Accordingly the Group strongly calls on the nuclear-weapon States to put an immediate end to such activities and refrain from any other action that would defeat

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the object and purpose of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, pending its entry into force.

4. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty stresses that the improvement in the existing nuclear weapons and development of new types of nuclear weapons contravene even the mere and still conditional, very limited and insufficient statements on negative security assurances provided by the nuclear-weapon States and violate their commitments undertaken at the time of the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

5. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty welcomes the signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by 183 States and its ratification by 161 States. In this context, the ratification by Iraq is welcomed. The Group, in accordance with its long-standing and principled position in favour of the total elimination of all forms of nuclear weapons, supports the objectives of the Treaty, which is intended to enforce a comprehensive ban on all nuclear test explosions, and to stop the qualitative development of nuclear weapons in order to pave the way towards their total elimination.

6. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty stresses the significance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, including by all the nuclear-weapon States, which, inter alia, should contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. The Group reiterates that if the objectives of the Treaty were to be fully realized, the continued commitment of all States Signatories, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to nuclear disarmament, would be essential.

7. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty believes that the five nuclear-weapon States have a special responsibility to ensure the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, not only because they are among the 44 States listed in annex 2 to the Treaty, but also because, on account of their position, they are expected to lead in making the ban on tests a reality. It will be possible to determine the success of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty only when it has been signed and ratified, in particular by the five nuclear-weapon States and those which have not acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and continue to operate unsafeguarded nuclear facilities. The Group is of the firm belief that the early achievement of the goal of the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, would be only through accession of the non-parties to this instrument. The universality of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is essential to achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

8. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty reaffirms that positive decisions by the nuclear-weapon States would have the desired impact on facilitating the progress towards entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Early ratification of this Treaty by the nuclear-weapon States would pave the way and encourage the remaining required countries, especially those with unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, to sign and ratify the Treaty. The failure of one major nuclear-weapon State to ratify the Treaty, and its not supporting the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization through rejection of one of the main elements of the Treaty's verification regime, is undermining this important instrument against nuclear testing.

9. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty recalls the undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States at the time of the negotiation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to ensure that the Treaty would halt both vertical and horizontal proliferation, thereby preventing the appearance of new types of nuclear devices, as well as nuclear weapons based on new physical principles. The nuclear-weapon States stated at that time that the only steps to be followed would be to maintain the safety and reliability of the remaining or existing weapons, which would not involve nuclear explosions. In that regard, the Group calls upon those States to continue to refrain from conducting any type of nuclear tests for the modernization, development or further improvement of nuclear weapons. The Group wishes to re-emphasize the principles of the non-proliferation regime, both vertically and horizontally.

10. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty underscores the importance of the five nuclear-weapon States maintaining and observing their unilateral moratoriums on nuclear weapon tests since the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. However, the Group believes that those moratoriums do not substitute the entry into force of the Treaty and its ratification.

11. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty emphasizes that the modernization or development of new types of nuclear weapons is contrary to the assurances given by the five nuclear-weapon States at the time of the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, namely, that the Treaty would prevent the improvement of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new types of nuclear weapons. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, States should refrain from any actions contrary to its objectives and purpose. In this context, the Group is seriously concerned by the decision of a nuclear-weapon State to reduce the time necessary to resume nuclear testing to 18 months as a setback to the 2000 Review Conference agreements. It is the view of the Group that such decisions undermine the validity of the commitment to declared moratoriums as well as the commitments under the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference, in which the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has been envisaged as the first of 13 practical steps leading to nuclear disarmament. The lack of progress in the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty also remains a cause for concern.

12. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty underlines the need for increased attention to the problems of safety and contamination related to the discontinuation of nuclear operations formerly associated with nuclear weapons programmes, including, where appropriate, the safe resettlement of any displaced human populations and the restoration of economic productivity to affected areas. In this regard, the Group acknowledges the existence of a special responsibility towards the affected people and areas, including those in the former United Nations Trust Territories who have been adversely affected as a result of the nuclear weapon tests conducted in the past.